

Message Text

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72

ACTION EB-07

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INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

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AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PRETORIA 0824

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, ETRD, EAIR, SF, US

SUBJ: SAFAIR REQUEST FOR EXPORT LICENSES ON SIX L-100 AIRCRAFT

REF: (A) STATE 025473

(B) PRETORIA 0535

(C) PRETORIA 0592

1. SAFAIR DIRECTOR ANTON LOMBARD TOLD EMBOFFS 3 MARCH THAT RATIONALE FOR PURCHASE SIX MORE L-100 AIRCRAFT BASED ON ANTICIPATED GROWTH IN VOLUME CIVILIAN AIR CARGO SOUTHERN AFRICA (AND ELSEWHERE) OVER NEXT 20 MONTHS. BASED ON CURRENT CONTRACTS, CONTRACTS UNDER NEGOTIATION AND INQUIRIES IN HAND, LOMBARD SAID SAFAIR WILL MORE THAN DOUBLE TON-KILOMETER CIVILIAN HAULAGE BY END 1976. IN ADDITION, SAFAIR HOPES HAVE PLANES AVAILABLE TO TAKE UP SLACK IN L-100 AVAILABILITY OUTSIDE SOUTHERN AFRICAN AREA THROUGH VARYING LENGTH WET OR DRY-LEASE ARRANGEMENTS WITH OTHER CARRIERS. IN THIS REGARD, LOMBARD COMMENTED THAT HE HAD BEGUN PRELIMINARY TALKS WITH ALASKA INTERNATIONAL RE USE OF SAFAIR-OWNED L-100 FOR CIVILIAN AIR CARGO CONTRACT IN PERU AS WELL AS IN SOUTHERN AFRICAN STATES FORMERLY SERVICED BY AIA. (AIA LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WITHDREW ITS L-100S FROM AFRICA FOR USE ON ALASKA PIPELINE.)

2. LOMBARD NOTED THAT SAFAIR COMBINED CIVIL AND LOGAIR HAULAGE HAD NEARLY TREBLED FROM 1973 TO 1974. TON-KILOMETER FIGURE FOR 1973 WAS 4,291,527 WITH LOGAIR TO CIVIL RATION OF 95:5. FOLLOWING YEAR FIGURES WERE 11,265,410 TON-KILOMETERS WITH LOGAIR TO CIVIL RATIO OF 17.6:82.4. (EVEN 17.6 LOGAIR PERCENTAGE IN 1974 INFLATED, HE SAID, SINCE SCHEDULED LOGAIR RUN TO SOUTH WEST, WHICH COUNTED AS LOGAIR, ACTUALLY TWO-THIRDS TO ONE-HALF CIVIL.) HE SAID JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1975 FIGURES NOT YET COMPILED BUT LOGAIR RUNNING SOMETHING UNDER 15 PERCENT.

3. CIVILIANIZATION AIR CREWS AND MAINTENANCE NOW COMPLETE SAVE FOR INFREQUENT USE WATERKLOOF AIR FORCE FACILITIES FOR MAJOR ENGINE OVERHAULS. LOMBARD INDICATED THAT HE NOT ALTOGETHER SATISFIED WITH EITHER SAA OR AIR FORCE MAINTENANCE SINCE IN BOTH INSTANCES PROPRIETARY INTERESTS TAKE PRECEDENCE OVER SAFAIR. HE SAID COMPANY NOW PLANNING ORGANIZE ITS OWN MAINTENANCE REPAIR FACILITY AT JAN SMUTS BUT THAT SHORTAGE SKILLED LABOR PRESENTS PROBLEM. HE MENTIONED THAT THEY EXPECTED ATTEMPT RECRUIT MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL IN UK. MEANWHILE, HIRING AND TRAINING AIR CREW PERSONNEL PROCEEDING APACE. SAFAIR NOW HAS ELEVEN COMPLETE, WHOLLY-CIVILIAN CREWS INCLUDING 22 PILOTS (CAPTAINS AND CO-PILOTS) AND 11 NAVIGATORS. FIVE NEW PILOTS BEGAN TRAINING 3 MARCH. BY MID-1976, COMPANY PROJECTS THAT IT WILL HAVE 18 CAPTAINS AND 16 CO-PILOTS QUALIFIED FOR L-100 SERVICE. BY MID-1975, COMPANY ALSO PLANS HAVE 23 FLIGHT ENGINEERS/NAVIGATORS ON FLIGHT STATUS OR IN TRAINING.

4. AS STATED EARLIER CORRESPONDENCE THIS SUBJECT, SAFAIR CONTINUES IMPRESS US AS RESPONSIBLE CONCERN ENGAGED, IN THE MAIN,

IN DEVELOPMENT LEGITIMATE CIVILIAN AIR CARGO BUSINESS SOUTHERN AFRICA. COMPANY OFFICIALS HAVE MADE EXTRAORDINARY EFFORT COMPLY WITH LETTER AND SPIRIT U.S. EXPORT LICENSE RESTRICTIONS AND HAVE BEEN MOST COOPERATIVE WITH EMBASSY INVESTIGATING AND MONITORING THEIR ACTIVITIES. MOREOVER, IT EMBASSY VIEW THAT POTENTIAL AIR CARGO BUSINESS SOUTHERN AFRICA SHOULD ABSORB ADDITIONAL CAPACITY OFFERED BY SIX NEW L-100S. THUS, RECOMMEND THAT EXPORT LICENSES BE ISSUED.

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